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REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL PURSUANT TO SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1027 (1995)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 1027 (1995) of 30 November 1995, the Security Council requested the Secretary-General to keep the Council regularly informed of any developments on the ground and other circumstances affecting the mandate of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and, in the light of developments in the region, to submit a report on all aspects of UNPREDEP by 31 January 1996 for review by the Council. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request.

2. In my report of 9 December 1992 to the Security Council (S/24923), I had recommended an expansion of the mandate and strength of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) to establish a presence, in the first instance, on the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia's borders with Albania and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. I also indicated that the Force's mandate would be essentially preventive, to monitor and report any developments in the border areas that could undermine confidence and stability in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia or threaten its territory. In its resolution 795 (1992) of 11 December 1992, the Council approved my report and authorized me to establish an UNPROFOR presence in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The mandate of the Mission, its activities, as well as the main aspects of the political and military environment of its operations, have been fully described in several reports submitted to the Council since then (S/26470 and Add.1, S/1994/291 and Add.1, S/1994/300, S/1994/333 and Add.1, S/1994/555, S/1994/1067 and Add.1, S/1995/222 and Corr.1 and S/1995/987).

II. PRESENT ROLE AND STRUCTURE OF THE UNITED NATIONS PREVENTIVE DEPLOYMENT FORCE

3. UNPREDEP was established as a distinct operating entity in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia pursuant to Security Council resolution 983 (1995) of 31 March 1995. However, in view of the interconnected nature of the problems in the former Yugoslavia and in order to enhance coordination while

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avoiding the expense of duplicating existing structures, overall command and control of the United Nations presence in the former Yugoslavia was placed on the United Nations Peace Forces Headquarters (UNPF-HQ) and has been exercised by my Special Representatives, Mr. Yasushi Akashi and subsequently Mr. Kofi Annan, and the Theatre Force Commander, currently Lieutenant-General Bernard Janvier (France). The UNPREDEP mission in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is headed by a civilian Chief of Mission, Mr. Henryk J. Sokalski (Poland); its military Commander is Brigadier-General Juha Engström (Finland). They together ensure the effective day-to-day functioning of the operation.

4. The UNPREDEP military troop component currently consists of two mechanized infantry battalions: a Nordic composite battalion and a United States Army task force, supported by a heavy engineering platoon from Indonesia. The total strength of the military component is 1,000. In addition, 35 United Nations military observers are under the operational control of the Commander and 26 United Nations civilian police monitors under the Chief of Mission. The authorized strength of the civilian component is 168. Civilian and military personnel are drawn from 42 nations.

5. In conjunction with its major tasks of monitoring and reporting on the situation along the borders with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Albania, the military component of UNPREDEP cooperates with a number of civilian agencies and offers ad hoc community services, as well as humanitarian assistance, to the local population. UNPREDEP operates 24 permanent observation posts along a 420-kilometre stretch on the Macedonian side of the border with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Albania. It also operates 33 temporary observation posts. Close to 40 border and community patrols are conducted daily. The United Nations military observers complement the work of the battalions.

6. The role of the political affairs component of UNPREDEP has expanded as a result of the diversified nature and growing significance of the mission's mandate pursuant to paragraph 12 of resolution 908 (1994) of 31 March 1994. It has been effectively monitoring developments in the country, including possible areas of conflict, with a view to promoting reconciliation among various political and ethnic groups. The presence of civilian police monitors has considerably strengthened the mission's outreach to local civil authorities and institutions, in particular the police. Civilian police have also played an indispensable role in regular monitoring of areas populated by ethnic minorities. The mission's press and information unit has been active in raising public awareness on the unique role of UNPREDEP as the first United Nations preventive deployment operation of its kind.

7. To enhance its effectiveness and fulfil its mandate, UNPREDEP has cooperated with various regional organizations. In 1992 the Council welcomed the presence in the country of a mission of the then Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) (see resolution 795 (1992)). Subsequent resolutions, including resolution 1027 (1995), have urged UNPREDEP to continue its cooperation with the mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. UNPREDEP and the OSCE missions have developed close cooperation, based on the 15 April 1993 Principles of Coordination on issues of mutual concern. Frequent and regular meetings are held at all levels to exchange views and avoid unnecessary overlapping.

8. Since its establishment, the mission has worked closely with the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia (ICFY). This cooperation has mainly involved two areas: humanitarian issues and the promotion of dialogue on human rights issues involving ethnic communities and national minorities. UNPREDEP and the Humanitarian Issues Working Group of ICFY also strive to provide a valuable framework for peacemaking, peace-building and humanitarian activities in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Another area of cooperation relates to ethnic and minority rights. In this connection, UNPREDEP and the ICFY Working Group on Ethnic and National Communities and Minorities have cooperated in promoting legislative and practical improvements in favour of the Albanian and other nationalities. A series of meetings concentrated on new legislation in the fields of education and local self-government, as a result of which some legislation in those fields has already been adopted. Language issues and questions pertaining to citizenship and display of national symbols have also been discussed. Most recently, questions relating to media have been addressed. The ICFY Working Group sponsored an agreement between the Governments of Denmark and Switzerland on one hand and the Macedonian Radio and Television on the other, which provides for the delivery of television equipment for the tripling of emission time in Albanian and for a considerable increase in air time for languages of other nationalities.

III. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

9. The initialling of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina at Dayton, Ohio, on 21 November 1995 (S/1995/999, annex), and the signing of the Peace Agreement in Paris on 14 December 1995 (S/1995/1021, annex), represent significant milestones in the search for peace in the former Yugoslavia. Similarly, the Basic Agreement on the Region of Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium of 12 November 1995 (S/1995/951, annex), has offered fresh hope that peaceful reintegration of the region into Croatia may be achieved.

10. These new agreements have had a significant effect on the role and presence of the United Nations in the former Yugoslavia. By its resolution 1031 (1995) of 15 December 1995, the Security Council unanimously authorized the establishment of the multinational Implementation Force (IFOR) to implement the military aspects of the Peace Agreement. The transfer of military authority for the operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina from UNPROFOR to IFOR took place on 20 December 1995. As the mandate of the United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia, which is known as UNCRO expired, residual components of that mission are being wound down or transferred to the United Nations Transitional Administration in Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES) established by the Security Council by its resolution 1037 (1996) on 15 January 1996. A Transitional Administration and a transitional international force will govern the region during a transitional period and undertake tasks provided for in the Basic Agreement. Both developments have practical ramifications for the functioning of the United Nations mission in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

11. In my report to the Security Council of 23 November 1995 (S/1995/987), I noted the need to revert to the Council, as soon as practicable, on the

establishment of UNPREDEP on a fully independent footing. In my report of 13 December 1995 (S/1995/1031), I expressed the belief that the time had come to wind down the UNPF-HQ in Zagreb and to make the three United Nations operations in the former Yugoslavia fully independent. By its resolution 1027 (1995), the Council extended the UNPREDEP mandate for a period of six months terminating on 30 May 1996, without pronouncing itself on whether the mission should become autonomous. In view of developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the establishment of UNTAES as an independent mission, the time has come to re-evaluate the status of UNPREDEP.

12. Furthermore, the Government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has continued to express its strong preference for a longer extension of the mandate of UNPREDEP on the ground that the reasons which led to the establishment of the mission continue to exist. The Government is of the view that any hint of a possible early termination of the mission may be seen as a weakening of the resolve of the international community to promote stability in the area. In addition, the Government has expressed the wish that the mission should continue until three conditions are met, namely, mutual recognition and normalization of relations with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the commencement of negotiations on the demarcation of the border between the two States; the full implementation of the peace agreement in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, including its arms control and confidence-building measures; and the attainment of sufficient national indigenous defensive capability.

13. The resumption of official duties by President Kiro Gligorov in January 1996, following the attempt on his life last October has been a welcome development at both the national and international levels. His return to office has been considered propitious for both political continuity and stability. It is a widely held belief that President Gligorov's return to political life will also help in defusing tension and suspicions, which have increased following the assassination attempt.

14. Notwithstanding considerable progress in many areas of domestic life in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, internal difficulties and threats to stability persist. The political scene remains divided across ideological and ethnic lines. Political partisanship is fierce and runs particularly deep between the non-parliamentary opposition parties and the ruling coalition, on the one hand, and between the ethnic Albanian community, the government coalition and the ethnic Macedonian parties, on the other. The absence of an effective parliamentary opposition adds to the political controversy, as does the lack of a viable dialogue on the country's future among the various political forces.

15. A complex network of ethnic problems, in particular between ethnic Macedonians and ethnic Albanians, contributes considerably to political uncertainty and social tensions. Claims and aspirations of other ethnic groups, including Rhomas, Serbs, Turks and Vlachs, also constitute a source of concern. In taking gradual steps towards reconciliation, the Government maintains that the main demands of the ethnic Albanian community (i.e. status as a constituent nation; university-level education to be conducted in Albanian, including the establishment of a special university at Tetovo; proportional representation in all institutions of public life; and recognition of Albanian as a second

official language) cannot be met immediately on constitutional grounds or for reasons of time to rectify the situation. However, the admission of the Republic to a number of regional and international organizations, including the Council of Europe and OSCE, has raised hope that the concerned parties will reach a mutual understanding with the aim of establishing a stable pluralist society.

16. In spite of a considerable effort on the part of the Government and some notable achievements, the state of the country's economy remains precarious. Official estimates indicate that the cost of sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and that of the economic blockade from the south amount to some US$ 4 billion. Production has been brought to a standstill in many enterprises, while in others it has been reduced substantially. Industrial production has dropped by nearly 50 per cent over the past five years and continues to decline. Close to half of the work force has been exposed to the hardships of unemployment.

17. In spite of several resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, including resolutions 48/210 of 21 December 1993 and 49/21 A of 2 December 1994, and by the Security Council (resolutions 820 (1993) of 17 April 1993 and 843 (1993) of 18 June 1993), few Member States have responded to the appeals to provide immediate technical, financial and material assistance to mitigate the adverse impact on the economy of States affected by compliance with the sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

18. The most significant recent event in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia's foreign relations has been the signing of the Interim Accord with Greece on 13 September 1995 (S/1995/794, annex I). In the past few months, the Accord has offered new evidence of its paramount importance and effectiveness in inspiring fruitful relations between the two countries. The Interim Accord has paved the way for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia's admission to a number of European organizations, which, over time, should improve the prospect of internal stability. My Special Envoy, Mr. Cyrus Vance, is again actively involved on my behalf in continuing negotiations to resolve the remaining differences between the two States, as prescribed by the Security Council in its resolution 817 (1993) of 7 April 1993 and stipulated in article 5 of the Interim Accord.

19. With varying degrees of reciprocity, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has been attempting to normalize relations with all its neighbours. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia remains the only neighbouring country that has not recognized the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and has yet to establish diplomatic relations with it. Following recent developments in the area, it is hoped that all States in the region will, in pursuit of the full normalization of their relations, soon recognize each other as equal, independent and sovereign partners.

IV. OBSERVATIONS

20. The deployment of UNPREDEP in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has played a significant role in preventing the conflict in the former Yugoslavia from spreading to that Republic. It has contributed to alleviating that country's serious concerns about external security threats and has served in part as a substitute for its minimal deterrent capacity. I share the view that the continuation of the UNPREDEP mission is an important contribution to the maintenance of peace and stability in the region. I wish therefore to recommend to the Council that the mandate of UNPREDEP should not only be continued but that it should become an independent mission, reporting directly to United Nations Headquarters in New York. Should the Council concur with this recommendation, I propose that for administrative reasons it become effective on 1 February 1996.

21. As an independent operation, UNPREDEP would be faced with the twofold task of maintaining its ongoing programmes while at the same time restructuring for a "stand-alone" operation. In proposing plans for an independent structure, my recommendations will be based on the assumption that, despite its new status, the operation would have basically the same mandate, strength and composition of troops. Careful attention will be paid to the advisability of retaining an economy of scale through the centralization of effort, office automation and the use of contractor services to limit staff establishment levels. At the same time, UNPREDEP will seek the redeployment of office equipment and other assets from UNPF-HQ in order to minimize mission capital expenditure.

22. In respect of ongoing programmes, a key priority will be engineering operations, which include both building and road maintenance components. Currently, heavy engineer support in UNPREDEP is provided on a temporary basis by a platoon of the Indonesian engineer battalion, which is an UNPF-HQ asset, and is due to depart from the mission area in March 1996. It is proposed, therefore, to make provision for a permanent arrangement for engineer assets in an independent UNPREDEP mission, which would require an increase of the authorized strength by approximately 50 personnel. Another major priority will be the communications infrastructure, which, because of the poor quality and congestion of local telephone lines, will need to be improved through the establishment of satellite links, including a direct satellite link with United Nations Headquarters in New York. Inadequate communications between the military observers outstations and their mobile units also require improvement, possibly by high-frequency radios or INMARSAT terminals. Removal of support from UNPF-HQ will also necessitate the establishment of a small local communications repair workshop. While transportation asset requirements for the mission will change marginally as a result of the independence of the mission, vehicle maintenance capability in the mission area will require enhancement.

23. There will also be a need for an improved local planning capability as well as enhanced hardware/software expertise and systems management capabilities. Provision will also be made for independent finance, procurement, personnel, United Nations security and general services offices in the planning of administrative services. The warehousing and supply functions as well as property management and control will be centralized. Receipt and inspections functions and property disposal functions, non-existent in the mission at the

present time, will be established. It is my intention to revert to the relevant United Nations bodies at a later date with concrete proposals on the financial and administrative requirements of the proposed change in the status of UNPREDEP.

24. With reference to international economic assistance, some countries and international institutions have attempted to react positively to the appeals of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to receive compensation for the special economic problems arising from the application of the sanctions. Member States, donor countries and international institutions should not lose sight of this important issue and support the efforts of the country to overcome the effects of the special economic problems arising from the implementation of measures adopted by the Security Council.

25. In my report to the Council of 17 September 1994 (S/1994/1067 and Add.1), I observed that this first United Nations preventive deployment mission could be judged effective only if it ended successfully. There are few indicators for measuring the full success of such an operation unless, following its withdrawal, peace and stability continue to hold, threats and tensions, so far contained, disappear from the horizon or channels and institutions for defusing them are built or consolidated. The original purpose of the deployment of UNPREDEP was to counter a possible impact of the conflicts engulfing other areas of the former Yugoslavia. At present, although the fighting has ceased and there is little evidence of a direct or immediate threat to the Republic, the effect of the existing tensions has not totally abated and the danger of fragmentation has not been averted. From the perspective of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the continued commitment of the international community to multilateral efforts towards stability in the Balkan region is vital. At the same time, it is recognized that in a longer perspective the litmus test of internal peace and stability will be the ability of all social, ethnic and political groups in the country to advance effective processes for the construction of a civil society capable of solving disputes through legal, peaceful means.

26. In this context, it needs to be reiterated that preventive deployment is not a static concept. This has proved particularly visible in the case of UNPREDEP, which has gradually evolved into a preventive operation along the lines spelt out in "An Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277-S/24111) and the Supplement thereto (A/50/60-S/1995/1). UNPREDEP has demonstrated that preventive deployment can work where there is political will, a clear mandate and purpose, and the necessary commitment on the part of all parties concerned.

27. I wish to express my profound gratitude to the troop-contributing countries for their outstanding share in the success of the UNPREDEP mission. I should also like to pay tribute to the Chief of Mission, Mr. Henryk Sokalski, and the outgoing Commander, Brigadier-General Juha Engström, as well as the dedicated civil and military personnel of UNPREDEP who have served with distinction for the past three years.